

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 00683 310643Z

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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

DIA WASHDC

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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SUBJ: ANGOLA

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SUMMARY: VISIT OF SENATE AFFAIRS MORAN TO ANGOLA HAS SPARKED
CONCERN WITHIN GOP THAT US MAY BE ABOUT TO SWITCH POSITION
LEAVING PORTUGAL HOLDING THE BAG. LEADER OF UNITA DELEGATION IN
PORTUGAL ALSO HAS PASSED ON TO US SAVIMBI'S CONCERNS IN THIS
REGARD. ANTUNES SAID ON JAN 28 THAT MPLA WILL WIN SHORTLY BECAUSE
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PAGE 02 LISBON 00683 310643Z

IT HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE POPULATION. HE EXPECTS THAT MPLA
WILL CONTROL MAJOR PART OF COUNTRY, AND WHEN THAT HAPPENS

PORTUGAL WILL RECOGNIZE. PRESSURE TO RECOGNIZE IS GROWING WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL IS SCHEDULED TO CONSIDER ANGOLA AT ITS NEXT MEETING. STRONG OPPOSITION TO RECOGNITION CONTINUES IN THE THREE LARGE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES, AND THE MILITARY IS FULLY AWARE OF THE DANGER OF PROVING THE 300,000 PLUS ANGOLAN REFUGEES IN PORTUGAL. NEVERTHELESS, ANTUNES, PROBABLY THE CLEVEREST OF THE MILITARY-POLITICAL LEADERS, IS LOBBYING HARD FOR RECOGNITION. HE HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE PRESIDENT AND OTHER INFLUENTIAL MILITARY LIKE CDR CRESPO. A FIGHT IS IN THE OFFING, AND ITS OUTCOME WILL BE IMPORTANTLY AFFECTED BY PORTUGUESE PERCEPTIONS OF THE US POSITION. END SUMMARY.

1. REACTION TO MORAN VISIT: ARTICLES IN THE US AND BRITISH PRESS CONCERNING THE VISIT OF SENATOR TUNNEY'S STAFF ASSISTANT, MORAN, TO ANGOLA HAVE RECEIVED CLOSE ATTENTION IN THE PORTUGUESE PRESS AND IN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES. SEVERAL LISBON PAPERS HAVE SPECULATED THAT THE VISIT BY MORAN TO LUANDA AND HIS FAVORABLE RECEPTION BY THE MPLA INDICATE A CHANGE IN US POLICY. PORTUGUESE HAVE DIFFICULTY DIFFERENTIATING CONGRESSIONAL INITIATIVES FROM EXECUTIVE POLICY AND WE SENSE THEY ARE BEGINNING TO SUSPECT THAT THE US IS SEEKING AN "OPENING" WITH THE MPLA.

2. THE MORAN VISIT, THE HOUSE VOTE ON AID TO ANGOLA, AND THE FAILING FORTUNES OF THE UNITA AND FNLA REINFORCE THIS POINT OF VIEW AMONG THE PORTUGUESE. IN A JAN 28 CONVERSATION WITH THE PRESIDENT'S CHIEF OF CABINET, MAJ ANTONIO CALDAS, DATT WAS TOLD THAT PORTUGUESE ARE SENSITIVE TO "ISOLATIONIST" SENTIMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES. CALDAS SAYS THAT GOP FEARS THAT THE US WILL WITHDRAW SUPPORT FROM UNITA AND FNLA, AND LOOK FOR WAYS TO DIVIDE THE MPLA AND SUPPORT THE ANTI-SOVIET CURRENT WITHIN THAT MOVEMENT. GOP FEELS THAT IT MAY BE LEFT HOLDING THE BAG AND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE MPLA REGIME SOON ENOUGH TO GAIN POLITICAL ADVANTAGE.

3. UNITA CONCERN: PAULO TJIPIICA, LEADER OF UNITA DELEGATION TO PORTUGAL, VISITED EMBASSY JAN 28 TO "VERIFY" ALLEGED SHIFT IN US-ANGOLA POLICY. HE SAID HIS VISIT HAD
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PAGE 03 LISBON 00683 310643Z

BEEN PERSONALLY ORDERED BY UNITA HEAD JONAS SAVIMBI. SAVIMBI HAD BEEN ALARMED BY AN JAN 27 LISBON NEWSCAST WHICH REPORTED CONGRESSIONAL CUT-OFF OF AID TO FNLA-UNITA AND ALLEGED THAT MORAN CONVEYED TO MPLA LEADERSHIP PROMISES OF US SUPPORT TO MPLA AS WELL AS RESUMPTION OF CABINDA GULF PRODUCTION. EMBOFF SET HIM STRAIGHT.

4. ANTUNES POSITION: FOREIGN MINISTER ANTUNES AT JAN 29 BRUSSELS PRESS CONFERENCE REPORTEDLY SAID THAT "PORTUGUESE GOVERN-

MENT IS CONVINCED THAT MPLA WILL WIN SHORTLY, WITH OR WITHOUT SOVIET AND CUBAN AID, BECAUSE IT HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION." HE ADDED THAT MPLA HAD NO ALTERNATIVE TO SOVIET AID AFTER ITS ABANDONMENT BY OTHER COUNTRIES. ANTUNES SAID PORTUGAL WILL AWAIT APPROPRIATE MOMENT TO RECOGNIZE A GOVERNMENT IN THE CAPITAL WHICH CONTROLS MAJOR PART OF TERRITORY AND HAS SUPPORT OF PEOPLE." HE NOTED THAT MPLA IS IN GOOD POSITION TO BECOME THAT GOVERNMENT.

5. IN RECENT PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS, ANTUNES STATED THAT US AND PORTUGUESE INTERESTS ARE THE SAME IN ANGOLA -- TO KEEP THE SOVIETS OUT OF SOUTHERN AFRICA. ANTUNES BELIEVES THAT THERE IS A CURRENT WITHIN THE MPLA FAVORING UNITY AND INDEPENDENCE FROM SOVIET DOMINATION. NETO MAY BE IN THIS CURRENT AND ANTUNES IS CONVINCED THAT PRIME MINISTER LOPES NASCIMENTO IS A STRONG BELIEVER IN THIS POINT OF VIEW. ANTUNES RECOMMENDS THAT US GET IN TOUCH WITH AND ENCOURAGE THESE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE MPLA. HE BELIEVES THAT AN AGREEMENT COULD BE WORKED OUT IN ADVANCE FOR A DEAL THROUGH WHICH IN EXCHANGE FOR US RECOGNITION THE MPLA WOULD OUST THE CUBANS AND SOVIETS AND FORM A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY. GOVERNMENT COULD INCLUDE ELEMENTS OF UNITA LESS SAVIMBI, WHO MPLA CONSIDERS A "TRAITOR" BECAUSE OF HIS PRE-APRIL 1974 DEALS WITH THE SOVIETS. FNLA WOULD BE BEYOND THE PALE IN ANTUNES'S ESTIMATION.

6. COMMENT: PRESSURE TO RECOGNIZE IS GROWING WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT, AND THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL IS SCHEDULED TO CONSIDER ANGOLA AT ITS NEXT MEETING. STRONG OPPOSITION TO RECOGNITION CONTINUES IN THE THREE LARGE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES, AND THE MILITARY IS FULLY AWARE OF THE DANGER OF PROVOKING THE 300,000 PLUS ANGOLAN REFUGEES IN PORTUGAL. NEVERTHELESS, CONFIDENTIAL
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PAGE 04 LISBON 00683 310643Z

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